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Since many states are currently revising their teacher certification regulations, at least five major issues are raised: (1) evaluation of competencies, (2) differentiated staff, (3) tenure, (4) merit pay, and (5) the related problems of certification levels, obsolescence of skills, renewal certificates, and hence, inservice education. An evaluation of competence is acceptable if it means self-evaluation and peer-evaluation; the ideal of horizontally differentiated staff has value if no discrimination exists, financial or otherwise. AFT has taken some action on tenure and merit pay, and AFT-negotiated contracts often contain provisions related to inservice training, many based on the idea that forced certification renewal in order to offset obsolescence is unwarranted, unnecessary, and unprofessional for teachers. A "continuous progress alternative" is based on the ideal of personalized and individualized education and on the belief that teachers should assess their own strengths and weaknesses and establish their own self-improvement programs in a professional way. Among other things these programs should include contractual arrangements for travel, books and materials, and structured and unstructured workshops and institutes on newly conceived techniques. AFT collective bargaining contracts must continue to include as many specific aspects of this general alternative as possible. (JS)

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AFT QuEST Paper 3. Occasional Papers from the AFT Program for Quality Educational Standards in Teaching (QuEST)

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WHAT IS THE AFT-QuEST PROGRAM?

Persistent and emerging problems face the nation's schools:

Effective teaching
Use of paraprofessionals
Decentralization and community control
Teacher education and certification
Implementation of the More Effective Schools concept
Eradicating racism in education

As the teacher revolution sweeps through urban America, the American Federation of Teachers becomes increasingly aware of its special responsibilities to offer solutions to these other problems. In January, 1968, the AFT's executive council, with representatives on it from most of the nation's big cities, held a special two-day conference to consider these problems and the AFT's responsibilities.

Out of this conference came a mandate for a *continuing body of active and concerned AFT educators* who could—

Anticipate some of the emerging problems resulting from the rapid social changes in our society;

Meet on a regular basis;

Stimulate and initiate confrontations between teachers and these problems at state, local, and national levels;

Organize and coordinate regional and national conferences;

Prepare tentative positions for action by AFT legislative bodies; and

Suggest action programs to implement their findings.

Thus was born QuEST.

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QUALITY TEACHING: Some New Thoughts on AFT's Role in Inservice Education

(Reprinted from *American Teacher* - March 1969)

[A commitment to quality teaching is nowhere more evident than among the vast majority of members of the American Federation of Teachers.

By the thousands, AFT members have planned and attended conferences and workshops on Racism in Education, More Effective Schools, and labor education at which they've confronted the inadequacies of the urban curricula. These conferences have been held in virtually every major city where AFT is the bargaining agent over the past few years. In coming months, AFT will sponsor three regional meetings on decentralization and community control and others on quality education standards in teaching (QuEST).

In addition to its own union-sponsored conferences and institutes, AFT locals are insisting, more and more, that relevant inservice education programs be made a matter of collective bargaining. Teachers are demanding the right to identify weaknesses and plan the programs to correct these weaknesses.

The following survey, by AFT Research Director Robert Bhaerman, takes a look at the union's role in the continuing training of classroom teachers.]

By Robert D. Bhaerman

Probably the most serious problem regarding inservice education has to do with the word itself. To many teachers, "inservice" brings to mind endless hours of unstimulating institutes. All too often, "Mickey Mouse courses" are accurate descriptions of what takes place. In other words, not much.

Recently, Harold Taylor, formerly president of Sarah Lawrence College, wrote that he would "like to see everyone in education...free themselves for more time to raise questions about what they should be doing to make education interesting and engrossing to those undergoing it." But the term "inservice education" usually makes teachers say "phooey," and worse, when it is mentioned. The continuous education of teachers must be made not only "interesting and engrossing," but more meaningful and significant than it has been in the past. This is not easy, however, because a great number of other problems are both directly and indirectly related.

One of these areas, not surprisingly, is teacher certification. According to the most recent Manual on Certification Requirements for School Personnel in the United States, 23 of the 50 states do not issue permanent certifcates; that is, certificates must be renewed in some manner. Usually that is through additional education courses. In Pennsylvania, for example, 24 post-baccalaureate credits must be earned during the first six years of actual teaching. In Indiana, provisional certificates are convertible to permanent professional certificates with a master's degree and three years experience. Massachusetts also has a permanent certificate, but that state is undergoing a fascinating and troubling review of certification requirements. In addition to Massachusetts, the states of Washington, Pennsylvania, Kentucky, and

North Carolina currently are revising their certification regulations, and others are sure to follow.

DANGER OF HARASSMENT

In the Massachusetts review, one finds a number of suggestions which indicate an effort to set up arbitrary requirements, rigid patterns, and the machinery for widespread teacher harassment, stratification, and control. Here, in brief, is what Massachusetts is considering:

o Four levels of licenses are suggested: internship licenses for those in training; associate-teacher licenses for beginning teachers; professional licenses for those who demonstrate ability to handle professional assignments independently of supervision; and educational specialists licenses for "high level" teachers. (p. 13-14)

o Provisions should be made for periodic renewals of licenses, without reference to tenure, based upon demonstrated maintenance of scholarship and professional competence. Suggested renewal points are: internship licenses--annually; associate teacher licenses--every three years; professional and educational specialists licenses--every seven years. (p. 14)

o Judgments of successful practice are to be made at various points in the careers of all educational personnel; during training, at the time of employment, for particular assignments, for retention in a position or school system, when tenure is awarded, for promotions, and--yes, in some school systems--as a basis for merit raises. (p. 62)

o Policies such as employment qualifications, staffing assignments, salaries, promotion, and tenure should be related to the new differentiated uses of teaching talents. A key objective should be to provide opportunities for appropriate professional contributions, advancement, financial reward and professional prestige within the instructional team. (p. 12) School systems should move as rapidly as possible to adapt all personnel policies to the new differentiations of teaching that qualify teachers for higher levels of certification and for the periodic renewal of licenses. (p. 18)

o To protect against professional obsolescence, the renewal of all certificates needs to be required at periodic intervals. Decisions to extend licenses to practice should be based upon judgments of adequate professional performance at the level of certification. (p. 60)

o Failure to maintain the level of performance for licensure could result in nonrenewal, thus disqualification. In some instances, however, when the failure is inability to perform at an advanced professional level, such as professional or specialist, it may be decided to reduce the level of license to that of performance capabilities. Thus, a professional teacher who fails to maintain competence to perform independently might be licensed as an associate teacher and permitted to work under supervision. (p. 72)

At least five major issues are raised: (1) evaluation of competencies, (2) differentiated staff, (3) tenure, (4) merit pay, and (5) the related problems of certification levels, obsolescence of skills, renewal of

certificates, and, hence, inservice education. In discussing these, it must be emphasized that these are my personal views, and not necessarily AFT policy.

EVALUATION: HOW?

As far as the evaluation of teaching competencies, my purpose is not to spell out the details of how this can be done. Others are doing that. However, I wish to make three points: evaluation of competencies is being done with increasing frequency; I am confident that it can be done with an increasing degree of reliability, validity, and sophistication; and I support the work of those research scholars who are working to develop such devices. While I am concerned, obviously, with how evaluation is done technically, I am as much concerned with when it is done, by whom it is done, and the framework and spirit in which it is done.

While it has not yet found wide adoption in practice, the concept of differentiated staff levels also is being considered by many persons in education. And while I cannot accept all of the goals of the advocates of differentiated staff (e.g., merit), I do not entirely discount the validity of the concept, particularly as it implies differentiated activities and responsibilities on a horizontal, and not vertical, level.

Task analysis must be ongoing. Some teachers are more skilled at some things than others. Hence, some should be involved with diagnosis and guidance, others with directing instruction, still others with "support centers" (to use the language of the times). It is not the concept itself I am questioning, it is the unnecessary next step which the advocates make, that is, that differentiated activities and responsibilities must lead to differentiated salary schedules and a hierarchy of certificate levels. A differentiated staff, in my mind, is one in which some teachers diagnose pupils' strengths and weaknesses, while others work with the tools of the trade to build upon these identified strengths and correct the weaknesses. This is legitimate, not divisive, differentiation.

TENURE, MERIT PAY

That the matter of tenure is still relevant may surprise some people. But apparently the principle of job security is an ideal which, like freedom, must be fought for in each generation. As the Massachusetts proposal assures us, the tenure issue is very much alive. For, when it is suggested that tenure regulations should be adapted to support the proposed certification levels, we know that once more we must renew the battle for hard-earned job security.

As with tenure, merit pay periodically comes back as an issue and periodically is rejected by the vast majority of teachers, administrators, and school districts. I believed that Carl Megel, AFT director of legislation, had buried the issue once and for all when, as AFT president, he effectively argued the issue in several articles and pamphlets. In 1962, the AFT's Conference on Merit Rating concluded that this type of rating is a device leading

to educational "ward heeling" among faculties, and that it fosters confusion, friction, and ill-will among staff members. This is no less true today than it was then.

There is no doubt that the really tough issues are those dealing with the levels of certification, renewal, and obsolescence. It is trite to say that teachers must be continuously alert to the many new insights into educational theory, the learning process, curriculum and methodology. Teachers obviously must never stop growing or they are dead.

But once again, the question simply is not whether they do or whether they don't. It is: What is the fairest, most mature, and most professional way? Obsolescence can be overcome, I feel without the restrictions imposed by rigid certification levels and forced renewal, but through meaningful inservice-educational programs or "on-the-job training."

WHAT AFT HAS DONE

AFT-negotiated contracts often contain provisions relating to inservice training. Some sample clauses follow.

BOSTON: "Inservice meetings shall be programmed and conducted by the teaching staff in cooperation with the principal."

HARTFORD: "When an eligible teacher, as hereinafter described, successfully completes courses in fields of study for which he has received board approval, the board will reimburse such teacher one-half of his tuition for one course a semester and up to two courses in summer....The board shall pay the reasonable expenses...incurred by teachers who attend workshops, seminars, conferences, conventions, or other professional-improvement sessions..."

LYNN, Mass." "The parties agree that the school committee should continue to provide improved and diversified inservice training programs for teachers. It is further agreed that aid to nontenure teachers, in their teaching performance, be included."

CHELSEA, Mass.: "Teachers are to be allowed to attend professional conferences or conventions on approval of the superintendent."

TAYLOR, Mich.: "A reasonable number of classroom teachers shall be encouraged to attend meetings of professional organizations each year; requests for attending such meetings shall be made in writing to the superintendent."

PHILADELPHIA: "The board shall negotiate with local area colleges for an extension of inservice training in cooperation with the colleges whereby such course work will be recognized for purpose of teacher certification and advanced degrees. A sum of $600,000 shall be appropriated for the summer of 1967 and a like sum for the summer of 1968 for teacher fellowships for study in accredited colleges and universities under the criteria hereinafter set forth. The intent is to provide a grant of a sum equal to 70 percent of summer-school teachers' salary..."

NEW HAVEN, Conn.: "Programs will be developed, and instituted by the superintendent, which shall be aimed at topics such as the following: inner-city schools, disruptive child, curriculum and teaching methods, assisting individual teachers in improvement of their teaching methods, underachievers, teacher consultation....Such meetings will be held in the afternoon on released time when such can be worked into the schedule."

CHICAGO HEIGHTS, Ill.: "The board agrees to allow each teacher one professional day a year to attend professional meetings or visit professional activities."

BALTIMORE: "Teachers will be informed of all institutes and professional improvement programs sponsored by the department of education through the medium of the staff newsletter."

WASHINGTON, D.C.: "Teachers will be involved in decision making "in every phase and at every stage of staff and curriculum development" and the provision will focus "teacher staff development programs upon assisting teachers in understanding and exercising their role as decision makers in the classroom. The decision-maker role not only refers to the instructional aspect, but also encompasses such areas as the development of students, the curriculum, and the teachers' role in the community."

LAKE SHORE, Mich.: "The board agrees to allocate to each school building $10 per teacher to be used for employee attendance at educational conferences....At the commencement of the school year, the staff in each building shall determine the method and manner in which monies allocated for educational conferences shall be distributed within their building..."

NEW YORK CITY: "Beginning Sept., 1968, during the first two years of employment of a teacher in a special-service elementary school who has not had previous professional employment as a teacher, his principal may direct that teacher to devote no more than 30 of his preparation periods during his first year, and no more than 20 during his second year, to observing classes conducted by more experienced teachers, or to consulting others familiar with classroom problems, or to the performance of other training and orientation activities."

Most teacher union contracts also have provisions for sabbatical leaves, but these, too, vary in quality.

THE CONTINUOUS PROGRESS ALTERNATIVE

Forced certification renewal in order to offset obsolesence in unwarranted, unnecessary, and unprofessional for teachers. Obsolescence can be prevented by negotiating collective bargaining contracts with meaningful provisions for inservice education. Such a program, contractually provided for, is the alternative to rigid levels of certification, forced renewal, and obsolescence, I will call it the Continuous Progress Alternative.

If personalized and individualized education makes sense for our students, the same principles should apply to teacher education. If such an approach as independent study has proven valuable for students--and it has--it also should

have value for teachers. The alternative is individual self-development in good inservice programs. Among other things, these programs should include contractual arrangements for travel, books and materials for teachers, and structured and unstructured workshops and institutes in which teachers would be exposed to such significant concepts as Withall's social-emotional climate index and Flander's interaction analysis.

SELF-DEVELOPMENT

The alternative I suggest is based upon the idea of self-development, with teachers diagnosing their own needs and establishing their own self-growth programs apart from forced certification. As I see it, the basis of self-development programs should be, quite logically, self-evaluation. Teachers should assess their own strengths and weaknesses and establish their own self-improvement programs in a professional way.

I can accept an evaluation of competencies, if by this one means self-evaluation and peer-evaluation. I can accept, in one sense, the idea of a horizontally differentiated staff, if we can be certain that no discrimination exists, financial or otherwise. I can accept the challenge to overcome obsolescence of teaching skills, but we must do this in the most professional way. To date, the concept of continuous progress has been applied to public school children, but not as an alternative for public school teachers.

Serious dilemmas call for far-reaching solutions, and I do not believe these goals are impractical. Granted, they call for a great amount on the part of teachers and administrators, but I think it can be done.

A few teachers might be asked to leave the profession, but that decision should be mutually arrived at. Few teachers will be found so lacking that they cannot work effectively in some area.

The continuous progress alternative is based upon the idea that both teachers and teaching are part of a coordinated effort.

To summarize, this alternative means:

- o meaningful inservice programs contractually provided for;
- o personalized and individualized inservice education;
- o independent study;
- o travel;
- o purchase of professional books and materials;
- o meaningful workshops and institutes on newly conceived techniques;
- o regularly established sabbaticals;
- o research into instructional problems;

o teaching centers;

o staff-development laboratories for analyzing and solving instructional problems;

o self-development;

o self-evaluation;

o self-improvement;

o mutual agreement on teaching assignment;

o mutual agreement on the direction of self-development programs;

o renewed concentration on selection;

o renewed concentration on recruitment;

o cooperation among teachers; and

o teachers and teaching as part of a coordinated effort.

These ideas can be used as a springboard to get teacher reactions, further thought and discussion. We also must begin working now to improve inservice provisions in collective-bargaining contracts. We must continue to carry forth in our contracts as many of the specific aspects of this general alternative as we can.